E449
.W45

Imperfect copy

E444
.W45

Centennial Birthday Anniversary of Theodore D. Weld.

From the HYDE PARK (Mass.) HISTORICAL RECORD, Vol. IV, 1904.

ADDRESS BY GENERAL HENRY B. CARRINGTON,

LIBRARIAN OF THE SOCIETY.

The opening of the 19th century witnessed a fresh outburst of soul-protest against human slavery. The pioneer agitators for general liberty and the extinguishment of all slave trade received active support from many earnest New England reformers, and four of that number are eminently worthy of notice from their intimate and confidential companionship with him whom this occasion especially honors. The four included (besides Mr. Weld) John Greenleaf Whittier, the poet and consecrated champion of universal liberty, Elizur Wright, and Hon. Arnold Buffum, so long Mayor of Lynn, the senior of the group in years, having been born as early as 1782.

On the 4th of December, 1886, Mrs. Cordelia A. Payson, of Hyde Park, gave a reception at her home on Fairmount, under the auspices of the Thought Club, in honor of Mr. Whittier's birthday, just passed, and invited three of the *quartette*, Whittier, Wright and Buffum, to meet Mr. Weld, and together extend congratulations to Mr. Whittier upon the completion of the task to which he had, together with them, devoted his life. It fell to my lot to offer the birthday tribute, partly in verse and partly in prose, and, under instructions of the Hyde Park Thought Club, the same was published and sent to Mr. Whittier.* His response was as follows:

Oak Knob, Danvers, 12 mo. 10, 1886.

GENERAL H. B. CARRINGTON,

Dear Friend:— I am glad of the opportunity which thy kind note offered me, to thank thee for thy contribution to the exercises of the "Thought Club" of Hyde Park, on the 4th instant. I wish I could feel that I deserve the high

[* The Tribute appears at the end of this article.—ED.]

compliment of thy tender and beautiful words, but I am truly grateful for them, notwithstanding.

I have tried to serve the cause of Freedom and Humanity, by speech and pen, while others, like thyself, have enforced their stern and righteous lessons in the dread arbitrament of the battle-field.

The incident of John Brown's address to thee and thy schoolmates, so long ago, is noteworthy. One boy, at least, took to heart the lesson and made it the rule of his life. I am very truly thy friend, JOHN G. WHITTIER.

He wrote from Amesbury, under date of June 7, 1890, in part as follows: "I am glad that my dear friend Weld is recovered from his illness. I have had some trouble with the fever and ague, and am still suffering from its effects. Will thee kindly remember me to dear Weld, and believe me, with high respect and esteem, thy aged friend, JOHN G. WHITTIER."

On the 14th of July, 1887, he wrote from Centre Harbor, N. H. "The passing away of our friends Buffum and Wright admonishes me that the end of earth to me also is near. I am almost the last of the old Anti-Slavery company. Of the sixty-three signers of the original Declaration of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833, Robert Purvis and myself alone are left."

"P. S. I am glad to hear of my dear friend Weld's health and vigor. He is one of the noblest men I ever knew, God bless him!"

On the 4th of January, 1889, he also wrote, "If thee see my dear old friend Theodore D. Weld, will thee give him my love. The death of several has left him and myself alone." The evening might be spent in similar proof of the tender relations between these two heroes who had united their lives in one common consecration to human liberty.

Mr. Weld, himself, was born at Hampton, Connecticut, Nov. 23, 1803. One who knew him well says, in a diary, still preserved, "Weld was an athlete, even in boyhood. He antedated Sam Patch in leaping from high trees into deep water, and beat Pontiac himself for riding down straddles. But for his midnight drowning in the ice locks of Alum River, from which he was barely restored, he would have lasted into the twentieth century."

He entered Exeter, a small boy, at the age of ten, but failing eyesight compelled him to leave for Philadelphia. In 1833 he became

Secretary of the American Anti-Slavery Society, and also initiated a system of Manual Labor schools, of which notice will again be made. As a student at Lane Theological Seminary, at Cincinnati, he soon attracted attention by his wonderful vocal and oratorical powers, which would hold vast audiences in rapturous delight, or arouse them to wild passion of approval or dissent. Mobs repeatedly attempted to drown his voice, and, as often, police protection was needed to save him from violence, although his nerve never weakened and he never exhibited fear as to the outcome of desperate and impassioned appeals in behalf of humanity. In a diary of Elizabeth Whittier, sister of the poet, his visits to her brother are described as "if an archangel had entered their home," and her language halts in the attempt to describe "the magical power and richness of his voice, the benignity of his manner, and the Godlike attributes of his very presence."

President Joseph R. Tuttle, late of Wabash College, then a student in Lane Seminary, took notes of one great speech of this "Thunderer of the West" and contributed it as "The masterpiece of American eloquence for liberty," to the "Patriotic Reader," now in use in our own schools as well as those of Boston, Philadelphia, and other chief cities. With all this matchless eloquence, fearlessness and aggressiveness of statement, he was thoroughly gentle, modest, self-denying, charitable and magnanimous. A few incidents mark his type of character during his student years. Class jealousies were so rife that lots were demanded as to choice of rooms, of which there were indeed too few. The excitement became heated. Weld, upon drawing second choice, declined to use it, preferring to take his chances at the end. The lottery fell through and an amicable adjustment was realized. A slovenly aud unsavory candidate for a room could find no roommate. Weld offered him a part of his room. A deep well, lined with moss-covered stone, was dangerous, but required clearing. No one would either volunteer or obey orders to descend and clear it out. Weld made the descent cheerfully, did the work well, hoping that "the well was all right at last." He assisted in organizing a negro school in a church basement, and although

three young ladies were nominally in charge, several students took their turn in teaching geography, grammar and arithmetic. The success was moderate, until Weld proposed to *start hymns* for a *change*. This was a new inspiration, and after the experiment was a success, he triumphantly exclaimed at the close of the exercise, "Bless the Lord! they can sing!" An English abolitionist sent him a desk, and with it $25 in gold. This he spent for the school, although his own brother immediately received a letter, "begging for a little money, just to buy a few shirts." This unselfishness marked his entire life.

Upon leaving the Seminary for more open public life as a travelling anti-slavery orator, he met frequent opposition from mobs. Having secured a church at Granville, Ohio, for a lecture, a mob at its close threatened to destroy the building if he again attempted to occupy its platform. Upon meeting the trustees and stating the threat, he responded to their anxious inquiry as to what was to be done, "Let them do it if they dare. I will then speak standing upon its foundation!" To a committee of the mob who repeated the threat, he sent this message: "Come on! Come on! We will entertain you, but you must bring your own winding sheets. I can't supply them!" He then delivered six lectures without interruption. At Painesville, Ohio, a stalwart ruffian beat a bass drum near his stand to drown his voice. His disregard of the instrument, his powerful voice, captivating manner, and graceful bearing, so impressed his audience, that one of the most violent of the threatening mob suddenly rushed at the drum and kicked the head, yelling, "I'm bound to hear him through. Be decent as *he* is, if you know how!" He left the ground with cheers instead of hisses. His fairness, sincerity, fervor and courage, with a remarkably assertive physique, brought victory. Even as late as 1863, Rev. S. J. May, of Syracuse, declared that "Wendell Phillips, as an orator, was his only rival in the cause of liberty"; but failure of his voice silenced his later participation in similar engagements.

It was at one of the Manual Labor Boarding Schools, located at Torringford, Conn., and conducted by Rev. Erasmus Goodman, the Congregational minister, and Dr. Erastus Hudson, the village

physician, both noted abolitionists, that John Brown, coming from his home at New Hartford, addressed the pupils upon the horrors of the slave trade, showing diagrams of slave-ship decks and their treatment. The late Rev. Dr. W. W. Patton, President of Howard University, Washington, has passed away, and no other pupil than myself is living. Both teachers were afterwards mobbed, Mr. Goodman dying in a hospital at Chicago, where Dr. Patton administered to his dying needs. John Brown, overwhelmed by his theme, called for a rising vote of all who would seek the termination of human slavery upon reaching manhood, and his famous words of blessing upon those who stood to their feet were never forgotten by the class thus addressed. Rev. Horace Day, a Yale graduate, the Latin Instructor, recently deceased, was the instructor who, at the request of the visitor, called up the Geography Class to hear his appeal. [See NOTE.]

In 1841 Mr. Weld became editor of the American Anti-Slavery publications at Washington, D. C., and was the especial companion of those members of Congress who favored the "Abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia." In 1864 he established at Inglewood, New Jersey, a school (said to be the first) for the joint education of both white and black youth. He had married Miss Angeline Emily Grimke, daughter of Judge John Grimke of South Carolina, in 1828, who joined the Friends in Philadelphia in 1835, and she at once emancipated the slaves inherited from her parents' property. In 1827 he published a book upon the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia and another upon "The Bible on Slavery;" in 1841 he published "American Slavery as it is, of 1,000 Voices," and in London, the same year, a volume entitled "Slavery and the Slave Trade, as it is in the United States." Others present will give his record in the various trusts held by him since his residence in Hyde Park.

NOTE.—John Brown's strange words to the Torringford School boys, as given by Dr. Patton to the students of Howard University many years ago, and as afterwards confirmed by Mr. Day, were these: "Now, may God Almighty, my Father, your Father, and the African's Father; Jesus of Nazareth, my Saviour, your Saviour, and the African's Saviour, and the Holy Ghost, my Comforter, your Comforter, and the African's Comforter, bring you early to Jesus, and enable you to redeem your pledge."

0 003 259 006 8

My personal relations with Mr. Whittier brought Mr. Weld and myself into very close companionship soon after my removal here from Boston, and his exalted spirituality comported fully with his undying devotion to whatever elevated American youth as well as men. His sphere of thought seemed to emit a divine radiance that illumined his very face, fascinating all with whom he had intercourse. His devotion to Mr Whittier had no limit. Even when the poet wrote sarcastic but half-playful verses, upon his *deserting him* and *taking a wife*, even declining to attend the the ceremony, there was no jog in their common step, and the "playful doggerel," as Mr. Weld styled the production, was a passing jest.

A few words are justly due to the memory of the other two, who visited Hyde Park together, and rightly have a place in our local historical record. Arnold Buffum, once Mayor of Lynn, born in Smithfield, R. I., in 1782, was a warm friend of Lafayette and was his guest in Paris. Lafayette, with the approval of Washington, had bought a plantation worked by slaves, to test the possibility of giving them education and mechanical training in connection with their emancipation. Buffum also escorted Frederick Douglass on his first trip to England, as well as defied conductors who refused Mr. Douglass a seat in the car with him when first visiting Lynn. In 1832 he was associated with Garrison in the publication of the "Emancipator" and was President of the New England Anti-Slavery Society.

Elizur Wright, another of the quartette, was born in 1804; graduated at Yale in 1836; was also Secretary of the American Anti-Slavery Society during 1833, and for a time editor of the "Emancipator." He published "Human Rights" in 1834-5, and soon after published, in London, an "Introduction to Whittier's Ballads."

In this fitly-named "Weld Hall," with his life-like portrait smiling upon our interview, it may not be too much to say, that as a friend and example to our youth, a pattern of good citizenship, and a model of Christian grace, bearing and accomplishments, we have yet to place upon our records the name of any to be classed as his superior.

E 449
.W45
Copy 1

13-6602

GENERAL H. B. CARRINGTON'S TRIBUTE,

In response to the Sentiment, "We honor John G. Whittier, the Christian Poet and Patriot," at the "Whittier Evening" of the Thought Club of Hyde Park, December 4, 1886.

On the sharp Sicilian promontory, past which the dreaded currents swept the tempest-driven mariner as he shunned Scylla, only the more to dread the sister rock, Charybdis, there lived an aged sire, whose life, just fading out, had been given to a single purpose from his early youth.

About his quiet cavern home, just on the cliff, the stunted stumps, trimmed closely, to suit their master's will, were strung with woven strands of silk, of varied size and length; and, save the random visits of such as sought his counsels, their tremulous response to the passing winds was his sole companionship.

He was the weather seer; and upon a stone, worn hollow by the use of years, he sat, hour after hour, with his chin bowed beneath his knees, supported by his hands, and his white beard and unclipped locks reaching to the earth, as he gave ear to the voices of the winds.

Not when the sharp treble screamed shrill notes, piercing painfully the ears of maidens clambering upward to seek some cheering words of lovers absent on the main; not when the deep-toned bass yielded its solemn melody and warning cadence, in unison with the surf that pounded the rocky coast below; but when each string just lent its burden to the chorus, not one lost, nor one oppressive, did his words declare the safety of those upon the sea, or bid his inquiring guests depart, to launch new ventures for happy issues.

The weather seer was wise, because he read aright the lesson of the winds, that harmony in law and action gives perfect safety in the realm of nature, and harmony is not sameness, but the sum of all influences maturing toward the Infinite.

Higher than nature in its strange and seemingly fantastic forms is the master work of nature's Master, *man*. Strange are the cords that vibrate in our souls. Now sharp, keen notes of strife; then stormy outbursts of fire and passion; and then, at once, the tenderest lullabies that woo the child's caress, and sighs as gentle as the whisper of the angels.

Man, who should be in full harmony of faculty and expression with those of the Infinite Father, is most discordant when life takes shape or mood from fitful eddies and yields not its every force to the complete control of Him who doeth all things well.

But life, thus chastened, poised and nerved, imparts fresh dignity to man. Its trenchant words or blows break rivets that hold the soul and forms of men in chains. Its gushing sympathies o'erflow the wastes of despairing anguish,

and lift the oppressed to cheer and hope and happiness. Envy, of such, is lost in the magic of their tender sway. Detraction shrinks away from the brightness of their benevolence. Passion is foiled by the supremacy of conscience, and the enmity of the bad finds no chance for assault, when that life is lived, alone to bless, and drops its charities and its goodness, like the clouds of heaven, for all alike.

There are *thoughts* and *times*, which, closely fitted,
Give birth to nations, grandeur to a life.
Enfolding in their marvellous embrace,
Such spur to action, and such lofty aims,
That perpetual fruitage is their end,
And all mankind take impress, never lost!

Such *thoughts*, from heaven derived, and nurtured, too,
Reflect the yearnings infinite which plead
For man's redemption from the curse of sin;
And when some human soul, by them controlled,
Commands its life to do their blessed work,
A brighter age begins, and man is saved.

Such *times* are burdened with the grievous ills
That mark the sweep of frenzied passion,
Grinding dependent ones beneath its heel;
And in the onslaught of the fearful hour,
Invoking e'en the spirits of the blest,
To cry in anguished sympathy, "How long!"

Blessed be they who live in times like these,
And, rising to the plane of stern demand,
Surrender thought, and self, and earthly gain,
To the mission of the solemn hour.
To rescue mortals—themselves immortal,
And thus take part in earth's deliverance.

I knew of one, whose thoughts, in just such times
Had caught their inspiring force from heavenly grace;
Whose heart beat true with "Over Heart" above;
Whose life took pattern from the Son of Man,
And humbly made His mission guide his own,
"Laying up treasure, that survives all else."

"O, loved of thousands," spared to us awhile,
Thy "hidden thoughts," thy "spirit tried and true,"
Thy "gentle deeds," thy words so full of power,
Shall never lose their gladsome, magic sway;
Shall never fail to nerve out heart and hand,
"Till Truth and Right shall reign, the earth throughout."

Poet and scholar, Christian, brother, friend,
Beloved of all, and in thy love embracing all;
Thy mission, like the misson of the Master,
But sought to bring again "God's Image" fair
To suffering slave and struggling man, oppressed,
That earth might bear foretaste of paradise.

Stay, O stay! if thus the Father wills,
While yet, sweet "Freedom's Voices" fill the ear;
And in the fullness of thy work, well done,
Though canst rejoice with us, who honor thee,
That in the times when Liberty was lost,
Thy thoughts kept faith with God's, and freedom came.

The swift-winged hours shall bear us quickly hence,
And yet, the parting on this hither shore
Is but the change of guard in campaign watches;
And when the struggle ends in victory,
We'll tune our voices to the unison
Of ceaseless melody, in heaven, with thee.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 003 259 006 8